

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 123 966

HE 007 728

AUTHOR Abraham, A. A.
TITLE How Have They Gotten Along.
INSTITUTION Florida A and M Univ., Tallahassee.
PUB DATE Nov 75
NOTE 13p.

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 HC-\$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; *Achievement Tests; Credits;
*Equivalency Tests; Females; Grades (Scholastic);
*Higher Education; Males; Student Certification;
*Student Evaluation; Tables (Data)

IDENTIFIERS *Florida A and M University

ABSTRACT

In January 1974, a sample of Florida A and M University's freshmen took and "passed" one or more of the five general tests in the College-Level Examination Program. A followup study was made of these subjects to: (1) determine how well these persons have done in the area(s) in which they have been advanced to the 200 level in corresponding subjects; (2) to determine how they evaluate having taken advantage of the acceleration option open to them; and (3) to determine what advice they have to offer their younger cohorts about preparing for and taking advantage of the CLEP mechanism. Results indicate: (1) the subjects earning CLEP credits maintained their advantage and did quite above average work during the first two quarters on the 200 level of their respective curricula; (2) GPA-wise, they did significantly better than their matchees who took the CLEP but failed to "pass" any of the examinations; (3) the academic performance of the successful examinees clearly appears to be associated with their high school background. Most of those returning questionnaires evaluated the experience positively and suggested that other students should be informed about and encouraged to take such examinations in the future. All of them felt that potential candidates for the CLEP should be encouraged to take as many of the so-called "hard" subjects as possible while in high school. (Author)

* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *

ED123966

FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL UNIVERSITY
Tallahassee, Florida

HOW HAVE THEY GOTTEN ALONG

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Test Service Bureau

A. A. Abraham, Director

November 1975

HE 007728

INTRODUCTION

Prior to the Board of Regents' policy on academic credit by external examinations for the State University System, there was considerable concern about maintaining and upgrading academic standards. To what extent are the skills, knowledges and values measured by external examinations similar to those acquired in the normative curriculum? How equivalent is equivalent? Since the ultimate criterion of achievement (success in life) is not available on students in school, the immediate criterion (success in preparation for life) is usually employed in assessment. Teacher grades ordinarily constitute this criterion.

To evaluate the equivalency of one widely used external examination (the College Level Examination Program) to the nomothetic outcomes of the traditional freshman curriculum in the State University System, the Board of Regents authorized a normalization administration of the CLEP throughout the system January 12, 1974. Of the approximately 2,000 freshmen who participated in the experiment, 63 of them were from FAMU.* They achieved the general results indicated in Table 1.

*A. A. Abraham, "FAMU's Freshmen and the College-Level Examination Program," Test Service Bureau, May 1974, 22 pp., (mimeographed).

Table 1. The Performance of a Sample of FAMU Freshmen: Hours Attempted, Hours Earned, GPA and Entrance Test Scores, Based on CLEP Credits Earned January 12, 1974.

CLEP crts.	Hours		Mean GPA	Battery 12th grade	No.	Percent
	Attempted	Earned				
0	16.2	14.3	2.58	251	32	50
6	15.6	14.2	3.00	347	18	29
12	16.2	13.4	3.04	351	10	16
18	16.0	16.0	3.56	424	2	3
24	16.0	16.0	4.00	458	1	2
Sum- mary	16.0	14.7	3.24	368	63	100

It may be seen from Table 1 that 32 or 50 percent of the sample failed to earn any credit at all. The remaining 31 or 50 percent earned from six to 24 credit hours. These 31 persons became "instant" sophomores in the area or areas in which they made the minimum cutoff score(s), the 50th percentile, in each case. After certain minor adjustments in scores, two of the subjects earning credits became full sophomores.

The purpose of this followup was: (1) to determine how well the 31 credit-earning subjects have gotten along in the area(s) in which they were advanced to the sophomore level;

(2) to determine how they evaluate having taken advantage of the acceleration option open to them; and (3) to determine what advice they have to offer their younger cohorts about preparing for and taking advantage of the CLEP and other acceleration mechanisms.

What Was Done

A sample of 84 freshmen signed up to take the General Examinations of the CLEP on January 12, 1974. Of that number, 61 actually took the examinations. Thirty subjects earned six or more credits in one or more of the five areas of the battery. One examinee never presented herself to claim the credits she earned. The remaining 29 examinees became the subjects of this followup. Except for limited comparisons, the other 31 subjects were dropped from the study inasmuch as they failed to earn any credits.

A questionnaire with 11 short-answer items was mailed to each of the 29 examinees claiming their credits and for whom mailing addresses were available. Twenty-three questionnaires were eventually returned. Several efforts were made to deliver the unclaimed questionnaires to students in the classrooms indicated on their class schedules. But we were unable to locate them this way.

The period covered by the study was for the first three quarters of the 1974-75 academic year. Grade-point averages include grades for the first quarter of the freshman year along with the second and third quarter averages for sophomore level work in the areas in which the subjects were moved ahead at the end of the first quarter of their freshman year. Some of the results of the study will be presented now.

Findings

It has already been pointed out that one subject never showed up to claim the CLEP credits she earned. Therefore, the results in Table 2 disclose the GPAs earned by the other subjects who took the CLEP January 12, 1974.

Table 2. The GPA Performance of a Sample of Male and Female Freshmen Who Took the CLEP in 1974, Based on CLEP Status

Status	GPA		Male		Female	
	Male	Female	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Credits	3.18	3.29	11	38	18	62
No credits	2.12	2.84	7	32	14	67
Summary	2.65	3.07	18	36	32	64

It is obvious from Table 2 that the female subjects who earned CLEP credits also made better GPAs than did their male matchees who earned CLEP credits. These females likewise earned considerably higher GPAs than did the sample of female subjects who failed to earn any CLEP credits. The male

subjects who failed to earn any CLEP credits made the lowest GPAs of the four groups. Yet they made at least a "C" average.

A more specific analysis of the performance of the subjects on the CLEP battery was by the number of credit hours earned by successful candidates. However, the reader is reminded that in Florida it is possible for a freshman to earn nine hours in each of the five areas of the general education requirements. However, the subjects of this study had already earned three hours of credit during the first quarter. Thus, it was possible for them to earn only the difference between nine hours in each of the areas and the three hours they had earned during the first quarter. The results of their having taken the CLEP Generals may be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. The Performance of a Sample of Students on the CLEP in 1974 Who Earned Academic Credits As Freshmen, Based on Sex

Credit hours	Male		Female		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
6	3	25	9	75	12
12	3	43	4	57	7
18	3	75	1	25	4
24	1	25	3	75	4
30	1	50	1	50	2
Total	11	38	18	62	29

It may be observed from the table that only two of those students earning credits, one male and one female, became "instant" sophomores as a result of the experiment. However, 12 subjects earned six credit hours in one or more of the five different areas of the battery. The male sample earned a little more than five credits each, while the female sample earned a bit more than 10 credits each.

Questions were also raised regarding the quality and quantity of the over-all record of those students who had been moved on to the 200-level of work in the area(s) in which they received CLEP credits. An analysis of those two aspects of their records may be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. The Selected Academic Performance of a Sample of Freshmen Earning Credits on the CLEP in 1974 in Relation to Other Academic Achievement

Credits	12th grade battery	Hours		GPA	Number
		attempted	earned		
6	319	47.33	46.83	3.16	12
12	332	46.57	46.00	3.27	7
18	371	43.25	38.75	3.02	4
24	370	43.75	45.25	3.41	4
30	440	50.00	50.00	3.83	2
Summary	366	46.18	45.37	3.34	29
Comparative Performance for Samples Not Earning CLEP Credits					
Summary	259	47.15	45.35	2.48	27

Although far from perfect, the results in Table 4 suggest a high relationship among scores on the entrance battery, CLEP credits and grade-point averages. However, the correlation for the entrance scores, hours attempted and earned is not as clear. This finding is emphasized by the record of the 27 subjects who failed to earn any credits at all. They attempted and earned about the same number of hours, but with less relative success. However, these 27 subjects did have a cumulative average of 2.48. Although no effort was made to determine it, it is reasonable to assume that, as a group, they had a better record than their classmates with similar entrance test scores but who failed to sign up on their own to take the CLEP.

How do the successful candidates feel about having taken the CLEP? Among other questions, the samplees were asked if they felt they were handicapped by being advanced to the 200-level in the area(s) in which they earned credits. Only three of the 23 subjects from whom responses were received felt they were injured academically by being advanced to the 200-level. However, one of these persons had a 4.00 GPA. The crux of his complaint was that the second quarter was about four weeks old when he entered the new classes. One of the others felt he was harmed because, "The discipline required by the earlier level course, I feel, is mandatory for being able to grasp theories and objectives of upper level courses, mainly because of the way teachers present the information."

The consensus about the content of the CLEP is that it correlates more closely with the knowledges, skills and values of the precollege curriculum than it does with other curricula. However, it is acknowledged that the same knowledges, skills and values may also be acquired in the other typical high school curricula. Or, they may even be acquired from informal self-education activities, for that matter. For instance, a freshman recently inquired about the possibilities of taking the CLEP because he reads from 10 to 20 extra books a month.

Of the 23 subjects returning questionnaires, 15 or 65 per cent took the so-called precollege curriculum. Six took the general education curriculum and only two took the vocational curriculum. There was at least one CLEP candidate from each of the colleges and schools in the University in 1974. While the largest number of successful candidates (seven) was concentrated in the School of Business and Industry, so also was the largest number of unsuccessful candidates (ten) in this school.

The subjects were also asked what curriculum they would take if they were beginning their high school program again. The 15 candidates who took the precollege curriculum all indicated they would take it again if they had to do it over. Of the six subjects who took the general curriculum, two said they would do it again, one without reservation.

The other subject said, "I would take the same courses over because I enjoyed them. I would also take additional courses in college prep because I see where it would be beneficial to me." Of the two respondees who took the vocational curriculum, both indicated they would not take this curriculum if they had to do it again, or that they would take the college prep curriculum along with the vocational program.

Would you recommend to others who can CLEP out that they should take advantage of the option was another item in the questionnaire. Of the 15 subjects who took the precollege curriculum, seven thought it was a good idea and eight thought it not such a good idea. Although this was a "why or why not" item, the respondees who took the general education curriculum said they thought it was a good idea. But they too failed to elaborate further. Both of the subjects who took the vocational curriculum would recommend taking advantage of the option, but also without further comment. No doubt this was a poorly worded item, too nebulous to respond to with clarity.

Note: If you did not receive a copy of "Credit by External Examinations at FAMU" during faculty preplanning, you may yet pick up one at the Test Service Bureau, 201-A GEC. It is on how to use the CLEP in counseling students.

Summary and Conclusions

In 1974 a sample of FAMU's freshmen took and "passed" one or more of the five tests in the CLEP General Examinations. A followup study was made of these subjects to: (1) determine how well these persons have done in the area(s) in which they have been advanced to the 200 level in corresponding subjects; (2) to determine how they evaluate having taken advantage of the acceleration option open to them; and (3) to determine what advice they have to offer their younger cohorts about preparing for and taking advantage of the CLEP mechanism.

The results indicate that the subjects earning CLEP credits maintained their advantage and did quite above average work during the first two quarters on the 200 level of their respective curricula. GPAwise, they did significantly better than their matchees who took the CLEP but failed to "pass" any of the examinations. The results also indicate that the academic performance of the successful examinees clearly appears to be associated with their high school backgrounds.

Most of the 23 returning questionnaires evaluated the experiment positively and suggested that other students should be informed about and encouraged to take such examinations in the future. All of them felt that potential candidates for the CLEP should be encouraged to take as many of the so-called "hard" subjects as possible while in high school.

Supplementary Information

Many instructors will be working with students who have taken standardized tests other than the Florida Statewide Twelfth Grade Program. The other tests normally will be either the SAT or ACT. The question of how equivalent is equivalent has already been raised. So with those limitations in mind, hours earned on the CLEP have been "closely" matched with corresponding scores on the SAT and ACT for guidance purposes. The relationship is rather clear as the results in the table below tentatively document. Of course, this is to be expected inasmuch as there appears to be wide agreement between test makers and classroom teachers regarding the nature of school abilities and how to measure them.

The Implications of Credit Earned on the CLEP in Relation to Performance on Three Batteries Used in the Admission's Process for Counseling Students at FAMU, Based on an Experimental Administration January 12, 1974.

CLEP hours earned	Battery "Equivalencies"			GPA
	12th grade	SAT	ACT	
0	259	760	17	2.48
6	319	880	19	3.16
12	332	900	20	3.27
18	371	960	21	3.02
24	370	960	21	3.41
30	440	1170	26	3.83